

## Press release

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### ADAC Rallye Deutschland has the highest safety standards

- Interview with Kai Hantel, Chief Safety Officer at the German FIA WRC event

Munich/Trier, 18 August 2015 – The ADAC Rallye Deutschland delivers spectacular rally racing every year, with the world rally elite taking their cars to their physical limits. One thing is indispensable to allow World Champion Sébastien Ogier, 2014 winner Thierry Neuville, Jari-Matti Latvala, and the other WRC drivers to approach the physical limits in a controlled manner: an effective safety concept. The comprehensive protection of participants, helpers and spectators has always been a top priority of the German FIA WRC round. Year after year, the required measures are extended and advanced in close cooperation with the authorities, as Kai Hantel points out. In our interview, the Chief Safety Officer of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland talks about the safety concept at the event and explains what it entails.

**Mr Hantel, what does the safety concept of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland look like?** “Basically, we strive to ensure maximum safety for our spectators and the rally drivers. Our strategies are very diverse. For example, where the spectators are concerned, we focus on information: Ideally, people should familiarise themselves with our safety systems before they actually come to a Special Stage (SS). In 2014, we created new means of communication for this purpose, which we have improved and enhanced for 2015 – such as the multilingual spectator map with safety notices handed out to each spectator with their rally pass. A uniform and easily recognisable layout at the rally, with clear signposting, also plays an important role. That is to say, as soon as a spectator arrives at a Special Stage they will immediately know all the dos and don'ts, where they are allowed to stand and where the no-go areas are.”

**Does the ADAC Rallye Deutschland present any particular challenges in terms of safety?**

“I'm thinking especially of all the stages in the vineyards which make the ADAC Rallye Deutschland so unique. In addition to temporary structural measures, we use information and education to enhance safety in these sensitive areas. We want to increase the fans' awareness and encourage them to assume responsibility for their own safety. Last year's safety video starring Thierry Neuville is a good example of this approach: In the video, Neuville explains what rally fans should heed and do in the vineyards. We have been using an updated version of the video in 2015.”

(Editors' note: to watch Thierry Neuville's safety video, go to “Spectators” and click on “Safety Devices” at [www.adac-rallye-deutschland.de](http://www.adac-rallye-deutschland.de)) Editors' offices may link to and embed the video for free)

**What are your principal tasks as Chief Safety Officer?**

“Before the rally, we focus first and foremost on selecting the sections of the itinerary and assessing the required safety measures. Then, we discuss and establish the safety measures with the chief officials for the Special Stages. We re-evaluate these measures time and again before the rally starts. In many cases, we have to think of the safety of people who are not directly involved with the rally: For instance, where a section runs directly along a public road, we install screens – mainly to protect road users. And to prevent motorists from getting a fright when a WRC car suddenly zooms past on the agricultural road to their right. As the Chief Safety Officer, my main responsibility during the rally is to make quick decisions and coordinate safety measures. What do you do when a car breaks down on the track and may pose a safety risk for the next few cars? Dealing with questions like this requires fast and good communication. All the messages from the Special Stage chief officials, the rally car tracking systems, the organisation vehicles and even from the police converge at the control centre. After the rally, our

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team meets again to review all safety issues: We review the various reports, watch the video footage recorded by the advance cars and see what we could optimise for next year.

### **Before the event, is there some sort of “safety check” of the Special Stages by a rally driver?**

“That is a very important aspect of our preparations for the ADAC Rallye Deutschland.”

Especially in planning new Special Stages, it has proven particularly useful to have an experienced rally driver do a test drive there. Actually, that’s not an easy task because, it goes without saying, this driver must not be an active competitor in the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. We have had an excellent cooperation with multiple German rally champion Matthias Kahle for quite a while. He’s given us plenty of good tips from a driver’s perspective, which we have incorporated into our safety concept.

### **Who else assists you in doing your job?**

“Of course, I’m not the only person in charge of track safety. That would be impossible even at a small rally, not to mention such a big event as the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. I can always count on my three deputies. They each have their own main tasks – e.g. coordinating the approx. 2,000 volunteer Marshals or preparing all the sketches and maps of the itinerary, which is enough to keep you very busy.”

### **You mentioned the Marshals: What is their contribution to a successful rally?**

“Without the Marshals, no rally – again, it doesn’t matter what kind – could be held. No matter how well you plan ahead: in the end, the Marshals are the ones it takes to optimally implement the safety rules and regulations at the rally. This is a task carrying great responsibility and for which only trained personnel qualifies. ADAC conducts special training courses for obtaining stewards licences, which are a prerequisite for Marshals at the WRC event.”

### **According to what safety criteria do you select the spectator areas at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland?**

“Generally, any spectator area has to meet at least the following criteria: It should not be located lower than the track, but slightly above it. The distance from the track should be adapted to the speed of the participants. Plus, the fans should not have to cross the track on their way to the spectator area. Otherwise, spectator crossing gates would need to be installed and monitored by experienced staff. Spectator areas are often very difficult to choose because of conflicting interests: Of course, we want the fans to be close to the action and have the most spectacular view possible. On the other hand, it’s always safety first. At the ADAC Rallye Deutschland, we always manage to find a very good balance between these requirements without compromising on safety.”

### **The “Spectator Safety Working Group” was established in 2014. What are its experiences?**

“The main purpose of this body is to exchange experiences. It is a regular meeting platform for the people in charge from all areas: Organisation, planning, spectator management and Special Stage management. Our common goal is to find ways to keep optimising spectator safety. That’s why it helps to look beyond the rim of your teacup. We have adopted and implemented numerous ideas from this group – for instance, the new pictograms on the info materials which say, at one glance: “allowed” or “not allowed”. Since last year’s experiences were positive across the board, we will continue the Spectator Safety Working Group in 2015.”

### **Are there any specific new safety measures for 2015?**

“First of all, we have refined the concepts that we had introduced in 2014. Moreover, we’ve adopted new ideas. For instance, the team leaders’ concept which we developed for 2015 is worth mentioning. This concept provides on team leader for approx. ten Marshals at certain Special Stages. The team leaders are important liaisons to the respective Special Stage officials. Especially when it comes to long Special Stages, we think this is a good way to improve communication.”

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### **Tickets still available on-site**

Anyone who does not yet have a rally pass need not miss out on the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. Even after the end of the on-line advance sale, last-minute rally fans will have the opportunity to personally purchase tickets at numerous outlets and offices. Rally passes are available here for €69:

Trier ADAC local office: Fleischstr. 14, 54290 Trier  
Koblenz ADAC local office: Viktoriastr. 15, 56068 Koblenz  
Idar-Oberstein ADAC local office: John-F.-Kennedy-Str. 7, 55743 Idar-Oberstein  
Saarbrücken ADAC local office: Untertürkheimer Str. 39-41, 66117 Saarbrücken  
Trier rally headquarters: Hotel Park Plaza, Nikolaus-Koch-Platz 1, 54290 Trier  
Service Park Trier, Messepark Trier, In den Moselauen, 54294 Trier  
Trier tourist info: An der Porta Nigra, 54290 Trier

Moreover, rally passes will also be available during the event at all on-site ticket offices and info points of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. For locations and operating hours, go to: [www.adac.de/rallye-deutschland](http://www.adac.de/rallye-deutschland) (click on "Spectator"). In addition to rally passes, fans can also buy tickets to individual Special Stages. The tickets are available at €15.00 in the spectator areas of the individual Special Stages. Single tickets for the Arena Panzerplatte Special Stage (Saturday, 22 August 2015) with its particularly comprehensive show and supporting programme including the Revolverheld concert are available at €20.00. One-day tickets for the Service Park are €5.00.

### **The rally pass at a glance**

The rally pass is the universal fan ticket to the entire four-day event of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. It provides access to the Shakedown and to all spectator areas along the Special Stages. The pass also includes admission to the Service Park. It offers numerous attractions to the fans. And it is the hub of the event, its beating heart. Here, the fans can watch the mechanics at work, admire the WRC stars along with their rally cars and obtain their autographs.

### **The pass includes**

- All Special Stages on all days
- Access to the Service Park on all days
- Access to the Shakedown on Thursday
- A spectator map providing all the essential information about the rally
- An ADAC Rallye Deutschland pass lanyard
- An ADAC Rallye Deutschland sticker

### **The ADAC Rallye Hub: up-to-date information at your fingertips!**

The ADAC Rallye Hub is the official on-line communication tool of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland, reporting live from the German FIA WRC event around the clock. At [www.rallyehub.de](http://www.rallyehub.de), fans will find almost any information from the social media channels: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube on one central page. In addition to current news from the WRC and ADAC Rallye Deutschland, comprehensive coverage of the ADAC Rallye Masters and the Deutsche Rallye Meisterschaft DRM forms the core element of the new ADAC Rallye Hub.

### **Now available: the official magazine of the 2015 ADAC Rallye Deutschland**

Exciting, informative, indispensable – the official magazine of the 2015 ADAC Rallye Deutschland is out now! 84 pages of fascinating reading all about the German FIA WRC event. As a companion for fans at the event and at home, it covers everything you want to know about the drivers, teams, itinerary, spectator points and WRC Rules and Regulations. Detailed maps, exciting background stories, exclusive interviews, an attractive sweepstake and many

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fascinating rally topics round off the rally magazine. The magazine is available for €5 at [www.adac.de/rallye-deutschland](http://www.adac.de/rallye-deutschland) and [www.adrenalin-verlag.com](http://www.adrenalin-verlag.com). During the event, it will be available at the on-site ticket offices, info points and Special Stages of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland (20 to 23 August 2015).

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